

Members of Congress and their staff enhance the program by discussing current constitutional issues with students and teachers and by participating in other educational activities.

It is inspiring to see these young people advocate the fundamental ideals of our government. It is important for our next generation to understand these values and principles which we hold as standards in our endeavor to preserve and realize the promise of our constitutional democracy.

In addition, I would like to recognize the commitment and support received from all of Incline Village, community organizations and parents. Individually, Bob Heilig, a community volunteer, has helped out a great deal with the students in the program. Judy Simpson, the State Coordinator of the program, and Daniel Wong, the district Coordinator of the Program have also contributed countless hours into making these students better citizens.

It is also important that we recognize the participants of this program individually. I would like to commend David Allison, Rochelle Comeaux, Ashley Hanna, Kristi Cole, David Gregory, Jonathan Shoop, Meghan Flanders, Daniel Herr, Danny St. John, Betsy McCann, Lee Rogers, Britt Van Hees, Elliot Becker, Ali Deroche, Jamie Ellsworth, Brooke Downey, Erin Myrmel, and Meredith Tiras for their hard work and tireless dedication.

The class from Incline High School diligently conducted research and prepared for their participation in the national competition. I again commend these young "constitutional experts" on their work for and commitment to the We the People . . . national finals. They represent the future leaders of our Nation.

#### TELECOMMUNICATIONS OWNERSHIP DIVERSIFICATION ACT OF 2003

### HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 9, 2003

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Telecommunications Ownership Diversification Act of 2003. This bill would level the playing field so that economically disadvantaged businesses owners could enter the telecommunications field. As you know, since the passage of the 1996 Telecommunications Act there has been an unprecedented growth in the Telecom sector, which has often been referred to as the telecommunications revolution. However, conspicuously absent from this revolution has been minority and economically disadvantaged business owners. They have in essence been left on the fringes of this telecommunications revolution. There are many factors attributed to this lack of participation but chief among them is the lack of capital. Because entry into the telecommunications field is extremely capital intensive, many deserving, well qualified small business owners have been denied entry into this vital sector because they lack access to the needed capital to compete with large companies.

My bill would remedy this problem by making minor changes to the existing tax code, so that individuals who are currently under-represented in the ownership of telecommunications would be able to compete on an equal footing with large companies. It would provide

sellers of telecommunications assets a tax deferral when those assets are bought for cash by certain small businesses. And it would provide investors an incentive to consider certain small businesses by providing a reduction in tax on gains from investing in these companies.

Former Chairman Kennard once eloquently stated that "ACCESS" is the civil rights of the 21st century. I believe the Telecommunications Ownership Diversification Act embodies the essence of this statement by making economically disadvantaged small business owners not only consumers of technology but also producers of technology. I hope that all my colleagues will join me in supporting this important initiative.

#### TRIBUTE TO MR. ROCCO BALDELLI

### HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 9, 2003

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize native Rhode Islander, Mr. Rocco Baldelli, of the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, and his accomplishments during this past month of April. As a rookie this season, Rocco has demonstrated his baseball savvy and athleticism while drawing on experience from his outstanding high school career at the Bishop Hendricken High School. We hope that this achievement serves as an inspiration to Rhode Islanders of all ages.

The Devil Rays's 6th pick in the first round of the Major League Baseball draft, this centerfielder recently, on April 30th, hit his first home run in the major leagues against the Minnesota Twins. This day also marked a special occasion, as Rocco's fortieth home run set a record for the most runs hit by a rookie in the month of April. He now has a fantastic batting average of .364 with 40 hits, and 20 runs batted in. As the House Resolution from the Rhode Island General Assembly I've included notes, Rocco reminds spectators of a young Mickey Mantle, Joe DiMaggio, or Willie Mays. I congratulate Rocco on his spectacular achievements so far this season, and look forward to following his continued success.

[H. 6396: State of Rhode Island, in General Assembly, January Session, A.D. 2003]

HOUSE RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING NATIVE RHODE ISLANDER ROCCO BALDELLI FOR SETTING THE MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL RECORD FOR MOST HITS BY A ROOKIE IN THE MONTH OF APRIL

Introduced By: Representatives T Brien, Reilly, Menard, Laroche, and Murphy.

Date Introduced: May 1, 2003.

Referred To: House read and passed.

Whereas, Rocco Baldelli was a standout baseball player for Bishop Hendricken High and was the 6th player chosen in the first round of the Major League Baseball draft by Tampa Bay Devil Rays; and

Whereas, Rocco plays centerfield and his athleticism and baseball savvy reminds folks of a young Mickey Mantle, Joe DiMaggio or Willie Mays; and

Whereas, On April 30, 2003 Rocco not only hit his first Major League home run against the Minnesota Twins, but his home run also set the Major League Baseball record for most hits by a rookie in the month of April, with 40; and

Whereas Rocco broke the record of 39 previously held by Seattle's Ichiro Suzuki; and

Whereas Rocco, thus far in the season, has a spectacular batting average of .364, with 40 hits and 20 runs batted in; now, therefore be it

*Resolved*, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations hereby congratulates Rocco Baldelli for setting this new Major League Baseball record and wishes him a spectacular baseball career and future induction into the Major 16 League Baseball Hall of Fame.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE NURSE EDUCATION PROMOTION ACT

### HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 9, 2003

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Nurses Week and honor the essential work that America's nurses do every day. It is important to raise public awareness of the value of nursing and to help educate the public about the vital roles nurses play in meeting the health care needs of the American people. Nurses constitute the nation's largest group of health care professionals. They serve in hospitals, nursing homes, schools, managed care facilities and community health centers, and their work is invaluable.

Unfortunately, fewer and fewer people are choosing nursing as a career. In recognition of National Nurses Week, I am pleased to join my friend and colleague Congressman ERNIE FLETCHER in introducing important legislation that helps address the nursing shortage by encouraging students to enter the profession. According to the General Accounting Office, between 1993 and 1996 enrollments at two-year associate nursing degree programs dropped 11 percent, while enrollments at three-year diploma programs dropped more than 40 percent. Between 1995 and 1998, enrollments at four-year bachelors programs dropped 19 percent. Even so, the demand for qualified nurses is increasing, and it will only grow as the baby boomers retire. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that more than one million new nurses will be needed by the year 2010.

This crisis threatens to compromise the quality of healthcare in this country. The Department of Health and Human Services reports that there is a "strong and consistent relationship" between nurse staffing and patient health. The GAO reports that between 2000 and 2030, the group of Americans who are 65 years of age and older will double. At the same time, the number of women between 25 and 54—the group that traditionally comprises most of the nursing workforce—is expected to remain the same. Mr. Speaker, today, more than ever before, we need nurses to care for our seniors. Unless we create incentives and opportunities for men and women to choose nursing as a career, this country will face a crisis in the next ten years.

To help address this problem, Congressman ERNIE FLETCHER and I are introducing the bipartisan Nurse Education Promotion Act. Our bill addresses the nursing shortage in a number of important ways. First, it establishes a competitive grant program for associate degree nursing schools to be used for nursing